ORCHARD AND MEADOW

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ORCHARD AND MEADOW

By Zoe Meyer

UNDER THE BLUE SKY

ORCHARD AND MEADOW

THE LITTLE GREEN DOOR

THE GARDEN OF HAPPINESS

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Not far from the house the road turns. Here, just inside the meadow fence, stands a great oak tree. FRONTISPIECE. *See page* 1.

ORCHARD AND MEADOW

BY

ZOE MEYER

ILLUSTRATED BY

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PREFACE

We sometimes travel many miles to see the marvels of nature, yet there are none more truly marvelous or more worthy of study than those at our very doors. The aim of this book is to interest the child in familiar objects of nature about his own home, and to encourage him to increase his knowledge through observation and reading.

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"I shall only paint the upper side of this one," he said . PAGE 43

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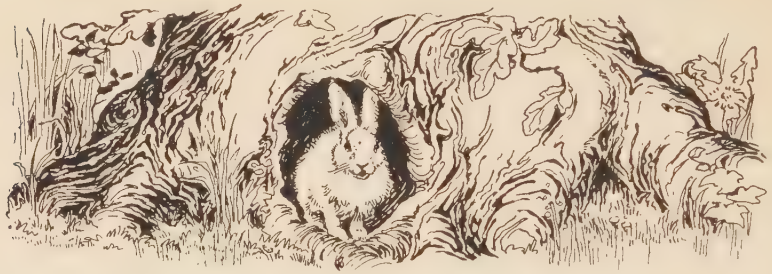
WHERE THE ROAD TURNS

Out in the country where the fields are green and the sunshine is golden, an old white house stands between two tall poplar trees. In this farmhouse live two children, Jack and Mary, with their playfellow, Rover.

Nor far from the house the road turns. Here, just inside the meadow fence, stands a great oak tree. It is an old, old tree which has stood at the turn of the road through many long, cold winters and warm, beautiful summers. In a snug home in the foot of its great trunk lives little Brother Rabbit, while in another home high up among its green branches you may find Bobby Squirrel. Sometimes when you are passing he may watch you from a long branch which

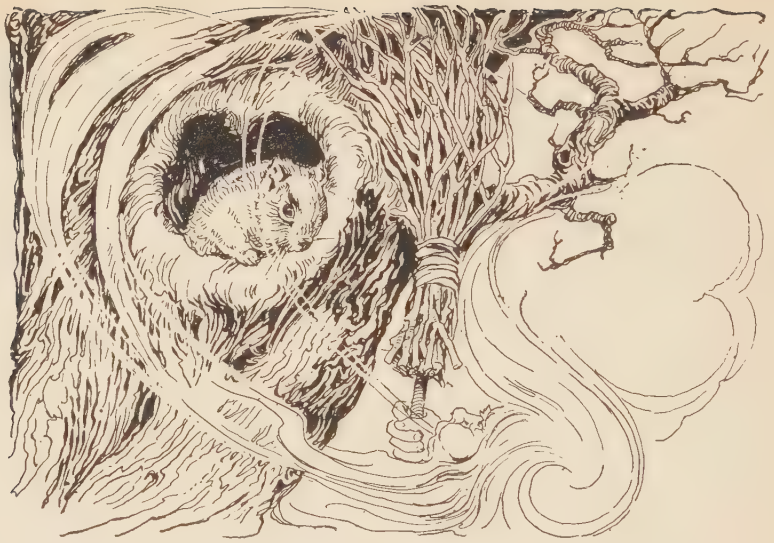


hangs over the road, or perhaps he will sit up and drop acorns on you as you pass under the tree.

Near the oak tree is a tiny pond where a lazy old mud turtle sleeps in the sunshine, or buries himself in the cool mud. Across the road is an orchard. Every spring the old apple-trees wear a beautiful dress of pink and white. Fat brown bees hum about them and birds build in their branches.

In the old stone wall beside the road lives Jimmy Chipmunk. You may not see him, but you may be pretty sure that he sees you from behind the green vines which hide his doorway.

Jack and Mary find it a very wonderful place to live. They are never tired of watching the flowers grow and bloom, nor of making friends with the little people of the orchard and meadow. In this book we shall hear of some of these little people.



HOW SUMMER CAME

Ever since old winter had gone back to the Northland with his cold and snow, there had been happiness at the turn of the road. First jolly old March had come, and with his windy broom had swept all the corners clean. How he did bluster about, and what a loud voice he had! He chased Bobby Squirrel into his hole in the oak tree, while little Brother Rabbit hardly dared to poke his nose out of his doorway.

Old March had a wonderful smile which made everyone happy when it shone out. But he would scatter a handful of snowflakes when the birds and animals were sure that at last spring had come, and would roar with laughter to see them scamper back to their warm houses.

For many days he played his jokes on everyone he could find. Then April came pattering down the road and old March went on his way with his snowflakes and his sunny smile. His work was done.

Gentle April brought with her a warm rain to wash the world clean and bright. It dripped from every leaf and made tiny ponds in the road. Billy Blue Jay sat in an apple-tree with his face to the rain. His feathers were pressed close to his body and the water ran down his back and off his tail. But Billy did not mind it a bit. No water could get under his thick feathers.

Before the rain was over, the sun shone out as if its face had just been washed. Then,

stretched across the east, was a wonderful rainbow in which shone all the colors of all the flowers that ever grew. Clear across the sky it stretched, like a beautiful bridge. Everything looked fresh and green and it seemed that each bird was trying to sing louder than its neighbor. Billy Blue Jay shook out his feathers and tried to sing too. But poor Billy did not have a very sweet voice.

April passed out of sight around the turn and May came, crowned with apple-blossoms. She promised the little people of the orchard and meadow that old Winter would not come again for many months.

Now the orchard seemed to be getting ready for a party. First, tiny pink buds came out on the brown branches. These buds grew and grew until, one beautiful day, the trees were quite covered with pink and white blossoms. How happy the bees were! They hummed and buzzed about all day long, gathering the sweetness from

the flowers. Every breeze which passed through the orchard carried the smell of the apple-blossoms far and wide.

Days went by, and one morning a stronger breeze came through the orchard and blew the white petals all about. They covered the ground like snow. Some of them fell into Jimmy Chipmunk's door in the stone wall, and some were carried far across the meadow. The apple-trees

no longer stood dressed in white and pink; they were now busy making green leaves and rosy fruit.

May's work was done, but, as she followed March and April, she left the meadow covered with golden dandelions to show that summer and sunshine had come to stay.

THE BEES' SECRET

Jack sat on the stone wall watching the bees in the orchard. The apple-trees were covered with pink and white blossoms, and the air was full of the hum of bees busily gathering the sweetness from them.

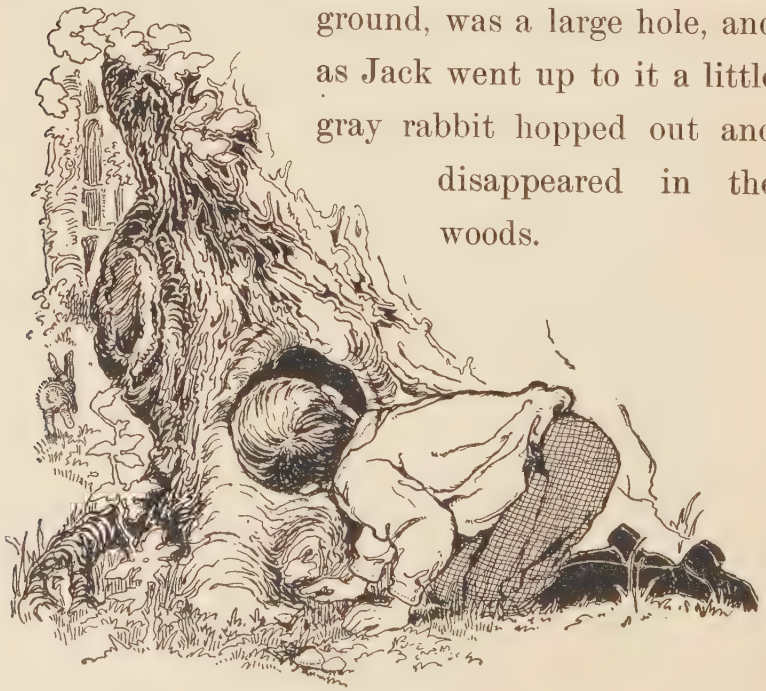
An old tree leaned over the wall close beside Jack. Into one of its blossoms crept a fat brown fellow, humming to himself. He came out a moment later, covered with yellow pollen, and flew away. Jack watched him as he crossed the meadow and was lost to sight. Others were going and coming.

"I wonder where they are going," said Jack to himself. "Maybe they are wild bees."

Jack was very fond of honey, so he decided to follow the bees and see if he could find the hive. He climbed the fence and started across

the meadow after the bees. It was not easy to follow them, however, and at the edge of the woods he gave up. Now and then a bee passed him, but was soon lost to sight.

Jack wandered on, looking and listening, until he was tired. Then he turned to go back. Not far from the edge of the woods he came upon a big oak tree. In it, close to the ground, was a large hole, and as Jack went up to it a little gray rabbit hopped out and disappeared in the woods.



"Perhaps there is a baby rabbit in there," he said to himself. "How I should like to see one!"

He crept softly up and looked in. The hole was empty, but he heard the strangest sound! The trunk of the tree seemed to be hollow, but it was so dark that Jack at first could see nothing. Then he noticed a ray of light far above his head. Still he could hear the strange humming sound, now from the ground, and again from high above.

Jack drew his head out and looked around, but he could see nothing strange, and the sound could no longer be heard. "Well," he thought to himself, "I wonder what that can be."

Just then he saw a bee come up and enter another hole high up in the tree. Another came, and another. Jack clapped his hands. "This is where they are storing their honey," he cried. "That sound must have been the bees humming, but I never heard them sound like that before."

The hole was much too high for Jack to look into it. Besides he did not care to have the bees find him poking into their hive.

At the barn he met his father and told him about the bee-tree. "May we get some honey?" he asked.

"We will wait a while until the bees have stored away more of it. Then we will take some, for they always make a great deal more than they need for themselves," answered his father.

That evening Jack remembered the strange sound he had heard in the tree.

"That was the bees humming," said his father, when he had been told about it. "The whole trunk of the tree must have been hollow, and it acted as a drum does, making the sound seem very loud."

In the days that followed, Jack went several times to the bee-tree to hear the strange humming, and he was always glad that the little gray rabbit had led him to it.

MOTHER QUAIL'S TRICK

"Bob, Bob White! Bob, Bob White!" came a cheery voice from the roadside. Jack and Mary stopped to listen.

"I believe that was a quail. Let us see if we can find it," said Jack.

The children crept up and looked through the fence. There, sure enough, was Mother Quail in her brown dress. As the children looked, she spread her wings and flew away across the meadow toward the woods.

"Let's go to the woods," said Jack. "We haven't been there for a long time."

So they crossed the meadow and entered the woods. They walked on until they came to a great oak tree. The sunlight shining through the branches made patches of light upon the moss and leaves which covered the ground.

"Let us rest," Mary said. "I am tired, and it is quiet and cool here."

At that moment there was a rush of wings and something rose up from the ground, almost under their feet.

"Oh, what was that?" Mary cried, catching Jack's hand.

"It must have been a big bird," answered Jack. "Where did it go?"

The children stood very still and looked about them. Nothing was to be seen except the sunlight on the leaves. All was quiet. Jack stepped up and sat down on an old tree trunk which lay upon the ground. There was another

rush of wings, and a brown bird flew to the ground a short distance from them.

"Why, it is a quail!" cried Mary. "But look! Her wing is broken."

Sure enough, Mother Quail was fluttering along the ground with one wing stretched out at her side, stiff and useless. "Perhaps I stepped on her," said Jack. "I am so sorry. Let us take her home and see if Mother can mend her wing."

The children followed Mother Quail but she kept ahead of them, just out of reach. Then, as Jack put out his hand to catch her, she spread both wings and flew away into the bushes.

"Why!" exclaimed Mary in surprise. "Her wing isn't broken at all!"

"No," replied Jack. "She must have been fooling us. Father told me once that the mother quail sometimes does that when she is found on the nest, but I had forgotten all about

it. Maybe if we go back and hide in the bushes she will come back to her nest."

The children hid in the bushes near the great tree where they had first seen Mother Quail, and waited. Sure enough, before long she flew without a sound to the old log, and looked about. Jack and Mary hardly breathed for fear she would hear them. For a long time she waited; then at last she flew to the ground and called, softly. And then what do you think happened? Out of the bushes came four of the dearest baby quails you ever saw. They looked like four little round balls of feathers. They ran to their mother and in a moment all was quiet again.

"Where did they go?" whispered Mary, her eyes round with surprise.

"They are still there," Jack whispered back, "but they are just the color of the shadows on the ground, where the sun shines through the leaves. Look near the foot of the tree."

Even when Jack pointed to them, Mary did not at first see them. Then one of the babies moved. "It is no wonder that we almost stepped on them," she said. "I can hardly see them now, when I know just where they are."

"Let us go and not frighten them again," whispered Jack. Slowly and carefully the children crept way, leaving Mother Quail with her little brown babies.

Their father laughed when they told him what they had seen in the woods. "Mother Quail played a trick on you that time," he said. "That was her nest which you found, and she led you away from it. You may be glad that you saw the baby quails, for they are very hard to find."

"I should think they were hard to find," laughed Mary. "I am glad Mother Quail's wing was not broken, and that we did not hurt any of her brown babies."

HOW BOBBY SQUIRREL FED THE HENS

On a box in the corn-crib was a basket into which Jack and Mary had been shelling corn. One morning, when Jack went to the basket, he found that much of the corn was gone.

"Oh Mary," he called, "did you take some corn out of this basket?"

"No," answered Mary, from the doorway. "I haven't been near it since we were shelling corn the other day. Where can it have gone?"

"I don't know," said Jack, looking around him as if he expected to see it.

"Maybe the chickens got it," Mary said, for at that moment a big white hen stood clucking in the doorway.

"They could not get it, up here on this box," replied Jack. "Perhaps Father took some of it."

But when their father was questioned, he knew nothing of the missing corn. The next morning, when Jack went to the corn-crib, more of the corn had disappeared. He could not understand it. Many times that day both of the children went to the crib but they found nothing. Jack put a few small ears of corn into the basket. The next morning some of these were gone.

"Perhaps the rats are taking it," said their father.

Then one morning Mary found out who the thief was. She was passing the corn-crib when she saw the hens all running toward it, cackling loudly. She stopped, and there on the roof she saw Bobby Squirrel. He ran along to a hole and disappeared.

Mary waited. In a few minutes out he came again, his cheeks stuffed with corn until they were very round. He looked so funny that Mary could not help laughing. When the hens saw him they set up a louder cackling.

Beside the corn-crib stood an old apple-tree, with one branch touching the roof. Bobby Squirrel jumped into the tree and ran along the branch. As he ran, he dropped several grains of corn. This was what the hens were waiting for and they quickly ate it up. Bobby Squirrel disappeared in the orchard and Mary knew that he must be taking the corn to his home in the oak tree at the turn of the road.

She sat down and waited. Before long Bobby Squirrel was back, and this time he came out with a small ear. It was hard to

carry. Once he dropped it and it rolled down the roof, but Bobby was after it like a flash and caught it before it reached the edge. The hens were waiting for him. This time he sat up in the apple-tree and ate the corn, holding it in his paws as he would a nut. The hens were ready to get every grain which fell to the ground.

Mary told Jack what she had seen, and the next morning both children watched for Bobby Squirrel. Jack did not like to have his corn taken, but when he saw how funny the squirrel looked with his cheeks stuffed full, he could not be angry.

"Well!" he said, "we know now who has been helping himself to our corn. He has been feeding the hens, too, so we should not care. If we shell any more corn, we will not leave it in a basket in the corn-crib."

IN THE OLD APPLE-TREE

There was great excitement in the orchard. The sparrows had found a tiny hole in the old apple-tree where a pair of bluebirds had made their nest. The bluebirds were away and the sparrows fought for the nest. Feathers flew and there was such a chattering that all the little people of the orchard came out to see what was going on.

Billy Blue Jay screamed, "Thief! Thief!" Mr. Woodpecker drummed on a tree; the brown bees buzzed; and Jimmy Chipmunk came out of his door in the low stone wall, wondering what it was all about.

At last two of the sparrows drove the others away. Then they began to carry out the grass and feathers that the bluebirds had put into the tree, and to make a rough nest of their

own, scolding all the time. While they were busy the bluebirds returned and found the sparrows in their tree. This would never do!

The sparrows scolded, but the bluebirds waited. Here they had made their nest and here they would stay. And after a while their chance came. Both sparrows left the nest at the same time. At once the bluebirds took possession and, although the sparrows soon returned, the bluebirds would not let them come near the hole in the apple-tree.

If Mr. Bluebird was hungry, Mrs. Bluebird

guarded the nest. If Mrs. Bluebird wanted a drink, Mr. Bluebird kept the sparrows away. At last the noisy sparrows gave up and left the orchard.

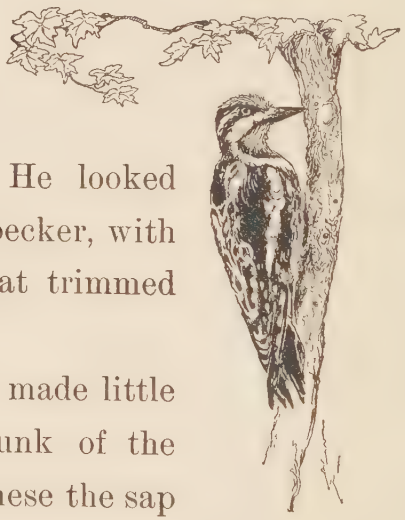
The sun now peeped through the green leaves into the old apple-tree to see a bright-eyed mother bird sitting on the most wonderful thing in the world — five pale blue eggs. Father Bluebird sat on a branch just outside their door and sang softly to her. The other little people of the orchard were very busy and forgot all about the bluebirds. Then, one day, Father Bluebird was so happy that he could not stay in the apple-tree. He flew all about the orchard, a flash of bright blue among the green leaves.

He and Mother Bluebird were both kept very busy, for there were now five mouths to feed in the little nest. How those babies did eat, and how fast they grew! The little hollow in the apple-tree was soon overflowing. Then

came a wonderful day when they were able to leave the nest and hop about the tree, and even to fly a little.

It was not long before they were as big as their parents and quite able to take care of themselves. It seemed as if bits of the blue sky were resting among the branches of the old apple-trees.

THE FEAST ON THE MAPLE TREE



On a little maple tree at the edge of the woods a big bird was tapping busily. He looked very much like a woodpecker, with his black and white coat trimmed with bright red.

His strong thick bill made little round holes in the trunk of the maple tree, and out of these the sap poured. He seemed to be having the best of times and it was easy to see how he got his name, for he was called a sapsucker. He stayed on the little tree until he had made a great many holes. Then he flew away, leaving the sweet sap running down the trunk.

He had not been gone long when the other little creatures began to come to the tree.

Some little brown ants came first and found the sap very much to their liking. More ants came, tiny red ones and big black ones, with all their families and relatives, and they all stopped to drink.

A honey-bee came next, and when she flew away she must have told her friends, for the bees came in great numbers. The air was full of their humming. A great black and yellow bumble-bee came along, talking to himself, and he, too, stopped to drink.

He crept all over the tree and drank until he could not fly. He dropped to the ground and lay there, buzzing happily to himself for a time, and then went back to the feast. He seemed to have forgotten that there was anything else in the world to do.

And now the butterflies began to arrive. A big black and green one with short trailers on his wings came first, and clung to the tree just below one of the little round holes. Mr.

Bumble-bee had a hard time getting past, for the butterfly was not to be moved. Next, two brown butterflies fluttered up. They lit not far away, unrolled their long, black tongues, and fell to drinking the sweet sap. Then came little white ones and yellow ones, some with black or white spots on their wings, some

without. They hung all over the tree, until it seemed as if a rainbow had fallen upon it.

And when it seemed that no more could crowd upon the tree, a big brown moth fluttered up and clung just under the lowest hole. It had just come out of the cocoon and was still covered with soft velvety down. In its beautiful wings were spots which looked like round red eyes. It looked very strange with the butterflies that love the sun, for moths fly about at night when the butterflies have gone to rest.

By and by there was a rush of wings and a big bird lit upon the little tree. It was the sapsucker returning to his feast. There was a great scattering of the smaller folk. The brown moth was the first to go. It was followed by the butterflies and many of the insects which had wings. The ants ran in all directions to get away from that sharp bill. In a short time all had disappeared except a

few butterflies and ants, and these kept out of the way of the sapsucker.

There was one, however, that would not be driven away. The big bumble-bee still clung to the tree. And when the sapsucker had gone again, and the great red sun was sinking out of sight, the bumble-bee still hung there talking to himself, too happy to fly away.

WHY OLD MR. CROW LAUGHED

Jack was helping his father plant corn. He worked hard, but the sun was warm and at last he grew so tired that he sat down under a tree at the edge of the field. Then he noticed several big black crows on the other side of the field.

"Oh, look!" he cried. "The crows are eating our corn."

His father looked where Jack pointed. "Well, well!" he said, pushing back his hat, "we shall have to make a scarecrow, Jack, if we want any corn."

"Oh, let me make the scarecrow," cried Jack, forgetting that he was tired.

"All right. I guess you have worked enough for one day. Run along and make it now," and his father went on with the planting.

Jack waited for no more. He ran off to the house and a few moments later came back with

two broomsticks and some old clothes. Mary was with him. In the middle of the field they put up a broomstick. Near the top of this they nailed the other broomstick for the scarecrow's arms.

"He is so thin," said Jack. "Let's get some hay and make him fatter. Then the clothes will fit better."

They brought hay from the barn and tied it to the broomstick. Jack put on it an old coat which hung almost to the ground, and Mary put on it an old straw hat. Then the children stood off to look at it.

"It would look much better if it had a face and hands," said Jack, "but I do not see how we can make them."

"Oh, I know!" Mary cried, clapping her hands.

She ran to the house, and in a very few minutes was back with a white cloth on which her mother had painted eyes and a nose and a mouth. Mary put this on the scarecrow's head, and put a wisp of hay through a hole in the old straw hat for a feather. But the funniest thing was when Jack tied on its arms some old gloves stuffed with hay. The fingers stood out straight and stiff.

The children laughed and laughed when they looked at it. Their father laughed too, as he said, "I don't think the crows will take any corn around here."

The next morning Jack and Mary went to the cornfield very early to see the scarecrow. As there were no birds to be seen, they sat down under the tree at the edge of the field to wait.

By and by an old black crow came flying up and sat on the fence. He looked at the scarecrow and called, hoarsely, "Caw! caw! caw!" The scarecrow did not move. The crow flew

nearer and called again. Still the scarecrow did not move.

Then what do you think that old black crow did? He flew up to the scarecrow and lit right

upon one of its arms, calling at the top of his voice, "Caw! caw! caw!"

"Mary," said Jack, "I believe that old crow is laughing at us. He isn't a bit afraid of our scarecrow."

"No, he isn't," Mary answered. "Just look at him now!" The crow was scratching away in the ground, right at the feet of the scarecrow.

Just then the children's father came up. How he did laugh when they told him about the crow!

"Well!" he said. "That must be an old crow which has seen those things before. We will leave the scarecrow there, anyway, and perhaps it will keep the other crows away. I am sure it looks frightful enough," and he laughed again as he looked at the scarecrow's painted face and stiff hands. But Old Mr. Crow had all the corn he wanted.

A HOUSE OF MUD

One rainy day Mary and Jack were playing ball in the barn, when the ball loosened a gray mass in the corner just under the roof. It fell to the floor and broke into pieces. The children went to look at it and found that it was made of mud, dry and hard. In it were many little cells, and out of one of these cells had fallen ten or twelve big brown spiders.

"It must be a spider's nest, but I never knew that spiders made nests like that," said Mary.

"I didn't either," said Jack. "But look! there are spiders in all of these little cells."

Just then their father came into the barn, and they showed him the queer spider's nest.

He laughed. "A spider did not make that," he said. "That is a wasp's nest."

"A wasp's nest!" cried Jack. "But what are all these spiders doing in it?"

"Did you find anything except spiders in it?" asked his father.

Jack took up a piece of the mud nest and shook out the spiders. With them came something which looked like a little white worm. "There," said the father; "the nest was made for that little white grub, not for the spiders. In time the grub will change into a big wasp."

"I have seen those big wasps flying around," said Jack.

"Did you notice what they were doing as they flew about?"

Jack and Mary had not, so their father went on. "When you saw her flying about, Mrs. Wasp was getting mud to make her nest.

When it was all done, she was still very busy getting all these spiders to put into it. Then she put a tiny egg into each cell and, closing the doorway, flew off and left the babies to take care of themselves."

"But what are the spiders for?" asked Mary.

"They are for the young wasps to eat," her father answered. "These little white grubs must grow and change into wasps with wings before they leave their mud house. Mother Wasp knew this, so she packed all these

spiders into each room for the baby wasps to eat. If you had found this after the wasps had gone, there would have been no spiders in it."

"There is another one up there," Mary said, pointing to a beam not far above their heads.

"Sure enough!" replied her father. "You can easily watch that one and see when the wasps come out."

Every day the children went to the barn to look at the wasps' nest, but it was a long time before there was any change in it. Then one day they found one of the cells open. While they were looking at it, another was opened and out came a shining blue wasp.

Mary screamed and jumped back, afraid that the wasp would sting her. But Jack was not afraid. "Father says that they will not hurt you if you let them alone," he said.

All the cells were now open, so the children took down the mud house and found that it

was empty, just as their father had said. All the spiders were gone.

"I don't like wasps," said Mary, "but I am glad we found out about them."

HOW THE STRAWBERRIES BECAME RED

Jack lay on his back under the big oak tree in the meadow, looking up through its green branches. Here and there he could catch a glimpse of the blue sky, or of a soft, white cloud. The bright light hurt his eyes and he closed them.

Suddenly a green acorn fell close to his head and, looking up, he saw Bobby Squirrel sitting on a low branch. "Hello, Jack!" he said. "I believe I'll come down."

Now Jack had never heard a squirrel talk, but, strange to say, he did not feel at all surprised. Bobby Squirrel was soon on the ground, and then Jack sat up and stared. The squirrel had vanished and there stood a tiny elf dressed all in green. On the ends of his pointed shoes and little pointed cap were tiny golden bells that tinkled when he walked.

"Do you want to go with me?" he asked.

"Who are you?" asked Jack, still staring at the little man.

"My name is Tinkle Top," replied the elf. "I have some work to do here in the meadow for the king."

"What king?" said Jack.

"Why, the king of the elves, of course," answered the little man. "Come along. I have no time to waste."

Jack said no more, but got up and followed the elf. They crossed the meadow to a little hillside. Jack saw that the ground was covered with wild strawberries, but they were still green. Here the elf stopped and drew out from under a toadstool a tiny pot of red paint. Then he did the funniest thing! He took from his pocket a little paint-brush and, sitting on the ground, he began to paint a berry.

"Why do you do that?" asked Jack.

"It is time for these berries to ripen," answered the elf.

"I shall only paint the upper side of this one," he said. *Page* 43.

"Do you always paint them?" Jack inquired.

"Yes, of course. What a lot of questions you do ask!" and the elf began on another berry. "I shall only paint the upper side of this one," he said. "It is so close to the ground that the other side will not show."

He painted away until all the biggest berries were red. The little ones he left green.

"There, that's done!" and he wiped his brush on a leaf growing on a bush near by. "Now I am ready to go."

He picked up his paint pot and started across the meadow. Jack stooped to pick a ripe berry and, when he looked up, the elf was gone. And then, strange to say, Jack found himself lying under the oak tree again.

He sat up and rubbed his eyes. In the tree over his head he caught sight of Bobby Squirrel. "Are you Tinkle Top?" he asked. But Bobby Squirrel only whisked his bushy tail and disappeared around the tree.

Before going home, Jack crossed the meadow to the hillside. There, sure enough, the ground was covered with wild strawberries, some red, others green. He picked a red berry which grew close to the ground, and found that the under side was still green. And on a bush near by was a single red leaf just like those which we see in the autumn.

"Well!" Jack said to himself, as he ate a juicy, red berry, "I must have dreamed it, but I am glad I found out that the strawberries are ripe."

THE CRADLE IN THE ORCHARD

Mary was playing with her doll under the big maple tree on the lawn. Her mother had given her a lovely piece of pink ribbon and she was just about to tie it on her doll's hair when Jack called her. She put the ribbon on the grass and ran to see what he had found. When she came back, the ribbon was gone.

Mary looked and looked, but the ribbon was not to be found. Jack looked, too. "Maybe the wind blew it away," he said.

"There isn't any wind," answered Mary. It was quite true. Even the leaves on the tall poplar trees beside the gate were still, and you know poplar leaves will move at the least breath. They knew Rover had not taken it, for he had been lying asleep under the porch all the morning. At last they gave up the

search and Mary decided that Bobby Squirrel must have taken it. So for several days she would not leave any nuts for him under the maple tree.

But Bobby Squirrel had not taken the pink ribbon. While Mary was gone Mrs. Oriole had come by, hunting for material for her new house. She spied the pink ribbon on the grass and thought it just what she wanted. So away she flew to the orchard, with the ribbon flying behind her.

Mr. Oriole, dressed in gay orange and black, sat in the oak tree across the road and sang. But plain little Mrs. Oriole had no time to sit in a tree and sing. She had chosen a place far out on a long apple-branch, and here she was making her nest.

She wove together long grasses from the orchard and bits of string which she found about the farm yard. In the bottom of the nest was a piece of green string which Jack

had dropped in the road, and now she had this long pink ribbon. She wove it in and out, in and out, until she had used it all. Then she sat for a minute with her head on one side and admired her work. Mr. Oriole came across the road and admired it too.

At last the nest was almost finished, but Mrs. Oriole still needed something strong to bind it well together. So she went to the

pasture where the horses were feeding. She flew about looking for a long horse-hair, but no horse-hair was to be found. She had to go back without it, but there in the road beside the orchard wall her bright eyes spied the end of a long, black hair. It was just what she needed.

Mrs. Oriole took the end of the horse-hair in her bill and pulled. The hair had been in the road for some time, however, and it was stuck fast. She pulled, but with no success. Then she called Mr. Oriole and he pulled until suddenly the hair was loosened, and he almost fell over backward.

The horse-hair was woven in. The nest was done, and a beautiful cradle it was. It hung far out on a slender branch, where the wind rocked it gently as it passed through the apple-tree.

And now it was easy to see why Mrs. Oriole wore such a dull-colored dress. As she sat on the nest, her dress was so near the color of

the leaves about her that it would have been hard to see her. It would never have done for Mr. Oriole, with his bright orange and black, to sit on that precious nest.

It was not many days until the three baby orioles filled the cradle to overflowing. Every day Jack and Mary went to the orchard to watch them, but it was not until the little birds had grown up and flown away that Mary learned the secret of her pink ribbon. By that time it was much faded by wind and rain. She knew, however, that it was the ribbon which had disappeared in such a strange way.

"Well!" she said, "here I thought the squirrel had taken it, and I would not give him any nuts for days and days. I am glad, though, that Mother Oriole put it into this lovely cradle."

JACK'S SURPRISE

From the orchard there came a loud clear whistle. Rover, who was passing, stopped and turned around, thinking that Jack was calling him, but Jack was not to be seen.

Again it came, a long whistle, followed by five short ones. Rover looked all around, but there was no one in sight except a big red bird sitting high up in an apple-tree. So he went on down the road.

The next day, as he was passing the orchard, the whistle came again. This time, however, Jack was with him, so Rover knew it was not his little master. Jack was looking up into a tree in the orchard. "There it is!" he cried. "It's a cardinal. See how red it is!"

Rover looked up and saw the big red bird that he had seen the day before. As he looked,

it whistled again, but this time the whistle was different. The bird seemed to be saying, "Pretty! pretty! pretty!"

"Yes, we know that you are pretty," said Jack, laughing. He whistled just as the bird had done the first time, and the cardinal answered him. Rover could not understand it. Here were Jack and a big red bird whistling just alike. The dog knew they were not calling him, so he barked and went on down the road, thinking that Jack would follow him.

But Jack did not see Rover go. He hid himself behind the stone wall and whistled again. Each time the bird answered and came a little nearer. Jack

could see its black necktie and big red bill. The crest upon its head flamed a brilliant red and stood up very straight.

"Oh, but you are a beauty!" said Jack, softly.

At that moment, from the woods across the meadow, came the whistle of another cardinal. The great red bird stopped and seemed to be listening. Jack kept very still. Again the call came, and like a flash the cardinal was gone.

"I believe I will follow him," thought Jack, climbing the fence into the meadow.

At the edge of the woods he stopped to listen. For a moment all was still. Then came the cardinal's whistle close at hand. At the same moment a bird flew into a thicket not far away. Jack knew the bird must have a nest in the bushes, so he crept up, very slowly and softly. He carefully pushed the bushes aside. Then he stopped and almost held his breath.

There, not many feet away, was a nest, and on it sat a bird. Jack could not see what kind of bird it was, but he could see that it was of some dull color. "Perhaps it is a catbird," he thought.

Then he saw a strange sight. There was a flutter of wings and the big red cardinal entered the thicket. What was Jack's surprise to see him fly straight to the nest, and feed the other bird something that he carried in his bill. Then, with a low "chip," he was gone again.

"How very queer for a cardinal to feed a catbird," thought Jack. Then he noticed for the first time that the bird had a crest upon its head. Jack knew that a catbird did not have a crest. Then he noticed that it had a thick red bill like that of the cardinal.

Forgetting where he was, Jack said aloud, "Why, that must be Mrs. Cardinal and this is their nest!" But at the sound of his voice

the nest was empty and Mrs. Cardinal was scolding loudly from the bushes.

"Oh, I am so sorry I frightened you!" said Jack. "I will go now and let you come back to your nest, Mrs. Cardinal, but I am very glad I found you. Perhaps I will come again some day, and see your babies."

As Jack climbed the meadow fence he heard again a clear whistle from the woods. Then he knew that Mrs. Cardinal had returned to her nest and all was well.

OLD MR. MUD TURTLE

At the edge of a little pond in the meadow, not far from the turn of the road, lay an old log, and on this log lay an old mud turtle. The sun shone warmly upon the log and old Mr. Mud Turtle felt quite satisfied with himself and all the world. Could anything be better than a beautiful weedy pond, a wet log, and plenty of sunshine? Mr. Mud Turtle slept and slept. Then he lazily stretched himself, and slipped off into the cool, muddy water.

When he climbed out again upon the log, he felt more wide awake. "Perhaps there might be something to see off there in the long green grass," he thought to himself. At least it would do no harm to see, if he did not hurry. Old Mr. Mud Turtle did not like to hurry.

Slowly he crawled off his log into the grass. He did not think it so pleasant as in the pond, but one ought to see the world. So he plodded on.

By and by he came to a great rock. He looked this way and that, but, seeing no way around the rock, he decided to go over it. He climbed slowly up the side, which sloped gently from the ground. At the top he paused to look about him, and he began to feel afraid. The rock was not very high, but it seemed to Mr. Mud Turtle as if he were very far indeed from the ground. He did not like it at all, so he started down the other side.

But here Mr. Mud Turtle got into trouble.

On that side, the rock did not slope gently to the ground. Suddenly he felt his feet slipping and, before he knew what was happening, he came to the ground with a thump that made him feel sick. But that was not the worst of it. He fell upon his back, and there he was with his feet waving in the air, unable to turn himself over.

There is no telling what might have happened to poor old Mr. Turtle, but, at that moment, Jack and Mary came by. "Oh, look!" cried Jack. "Here is a turtle lying on its back."

"Why, the poor thing!" cried Mary. "It must have fallen off this rock. Why doesn't it turn over?"

"It can't. Its shell is too heavy." Jack stooped down and gently turned old Mr. Mud Turtle over. This was just what he was waiting for and he lost no time in starting for home, this time going around the rock instead of over it.

Just then Rover came up and, seeing Mr. Mud Turtle, stopped in surprise. "Bow, wow, wow!" he barked. "What is this?"

He put out his paw and gently tapped Mr. Mud Turtle on the back. The turtle, however, did not feel it under his hard shell. He just kept on walking. Rover ran round and round him. Then he put his nose down and smelled the strange animal. Now this tickled old Mr. Mud Turtle. He stopped walking and drew in his head and his feet and his little short tail. There was nothing to be seen but his hard shell.

Rover was very much surprised, and so was Mary, for she had never seen a turtle do this before. "Why did he do that?" she asked.

"That is the way he protects himself," her brother answered. "Nothing can hurt him under that hard shell. We may as well go, for he may stay that way a long time." So the children and Rover went on their way, leaving old Mr. Mud Turtle in the grass.

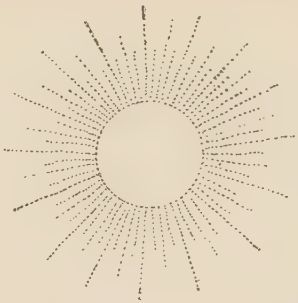
Then he put his nose down and smelled the strange animal. *Page* 58.

At length he poked his head out and looked around. Then, seeing no one, he started on toward home. It seemed a long way, for he could move only very slowly, but at last he came to the little pond and slid into the cool, muddy water. A little later he climbed out on the old log and fell asleep in the warm sunshine. He had seen quite enough of the world.

SUN-GOLD

High up in the blue sky shone the great sun, and down every sunbeam slid a tiny elf dressed from top to toe in shining yellow. They worked very fast upon the old brown earth, until the great sun turned from gold to red. Then they danced up its slanting rays and disappeared in the brightness.

The next morning what a sight met the eyes! The old earth was covered with shining gold. It was scattered all over the meadow in big yellow dandelions. It was half hidden among the round green leaves of the marsh marigolds at the edge of the pond. It was scattered through the woods in bright yellow buttercups, and tiny bits of it looked out of the eyes of beautiful blue violets. It seemed as if hundreds of tiny suns had dropped all over the meadow and the woods.



Now the little elves dressed in yellow visited the garden behind the house and here, too, they left their shining gold. A row of bright tulips grew along the path. Some were yellow like the sun at mid-day. Others held the bright red of the sky at sunset.

Beside the fence was a great bed of daffodils. These daffodils were the first to greet the sun as it rose in the morning, and the last to bid it good night as it sank out of sight behind the tall trees. It seemed as if a part of its brightness had been left behind so that the daffodils might be seen, even in the pale moonlight.

Not all the gold of the sun, however, was found in the flowers.

As the summer went on, tiny yellow butterflies flitted in and out among the flowers, while now and then a larger one would sail across the garden, its shining yellow wings trimmed with black. Brown bees buzzed about, their legs powdered with gold dust from the flowers.

There was a tiny, tiny bit of gold to be found upon the morning-glory vines that grew all over the fence. A great many leaves were full of little holes. These holes had been made by a tiny, golden beetle. He was very shy and kept himself well hidden on the under side of the leaves. When anything disturbed him he dropped to the ground. Sometimes he looked like a drop of pure shining gold. At other times he, too, wore the color of the red in the sunset sky.

So the summer days went by, and enough sunshine was stored up in the old brown earth to last until another summer should come to the meadow and the garden.

THE MOON MOTH

One evening after supper Jack started to the barn to get something that he had left there that afternoon. As the moon had not yet risen, and it was very dark, he stopped to light the lantern which his father used on short winter days.

As he went down the path, swinging the lantern and watching his long shadow tramping beside him, something fluttered about the light. When Jack looked it was gone, but in a moment it was back again. Jack stopped and held his breath. It was a beautiful, big moth. Its wings were of palest green, trimmed with lavender. The lower ones were drawn out into long, graceful trailers.

Jack thought he had never seen anything so lovely. Only a moment it fluttered about the light. Then it was gone into the darkness.

All the way to the barn, and back again, he thought of the beautiful moth.

"That was a luna moth," said his father, when Jack told him about it. "They are very, very beautiful. The other day I found one of their cocoons in the woods. I will show it to you in the morning."

"Why don't we see the moths in the daytime?" asked Mary.

"Moths never fly about in the sunlight," her father answered. "They love the darkness and the moonlight. That is why this moth is called a luna moth. It is named after the moon."

The next day the children went with him to the woods. There, in a little walnut tree, they saw a wonderful sight. The brown cocoon was open and the big moth had just come out. It

was hanging to a branch. Its body was white and its feet lavender. On its head were two short feelers, which looked like tiny fern leaves. Mary spoke about how beautiful they were.

"You can always tell a moth by its feelers," her father said. "The feelers of a butterfly are long and smooth, not at all like these."

"But where are its wings?" asked Jack, for there were only two wet lumps where the wings should have been.

"Wait and see," said his father.

As they looked, these lumps began to grow, and before long there were the beautiful pale green wings, marked with lavender. The moth slowly raised and lowered them to dry them. They grew stiffer, and in a moment more the moth was gone.

"I think it has a good name. It looked like moonlight, didn't it?" said Mary.

Jack was looking at the empty cocoon. "It does not seem as if that big moth could come out

of this old brown cocoon. What was it before it made the cocoon?" he asked.

"It was a big, ugly, green worm, eating the walnut leaves," his father answered. "Is it not a very wonderful thing to have it change into that lovely moth?"

Jack carried the empty cocoon home with him. In his room he had a large collection of cocoons, queer stones, and other treasures that he had found in his walks.

"I am so glad we saw the moth coming out," he thought, as he placed the cocoon beside the others. "Some day I hope I can find the worm and see it spin its cocoon."

THE STRANGE HUMMING BIRD

Two humming birds, as light as feathers from their own shining wings, flew about the garden. They were both a beautiful green, and upon the throat of one of them was a bright patch of red. This was Father Humming Bird. Mother Humming Bird had no red upon her throat.

They darted about from flower to flower, never resting. They poked their long bills far in, to get the honey, while their wings fluttered so fast one could hardly see them. Then they were gone to another blossom.

Mrs. Humming Bird did not stay long. She left the garden and darted away like a ray of sunlight. Through the orchard she went, and across the road to the big oak tree. And here, on a branch well hidden among the leaves, was a wonderful secret. Only she and Father Humming Bird knew about it.

It was a tiny, tiny nest, covered with moss like the great branch on which it was fastened. No one would have thought that it was a nest.

In it were two tiny, tiny birds, waiting for their mother.

Father Humming Bird stayed in the garden for a time, and Mary, who was sitting on the grass not far away, watched him as he flew from one tall flower to another. "How fast he moves his wings!" she thought. "I wish he would stop, so that I could see him better."

But Father Humming Bird did not stop.

Before long he, too, left the garden and flew away to the little nest in the oak tree.

That evening Mary came running into the house, very much excited. "There is a humming bird in the garden," she cried. "Why is it flying about at night?"

"Are you sure it was a humming bird?" asked her mother.

"I'm sure it was," said Mary. "It fluttered its wings all the time, just as the humming bird did that was in the garden this afternoon. It was getting honey from the flowers."

"I think I know what it is," said her father. "Let us go and see if we can find it."

They went to the garden, and there it was, fluttering about among the flowers in the bright moonlight. It looked very much like a humming bird, but it was not a bird at all.

"That is a moth," said her father. "It does fly like a humming bird, and for that reason it is sometimes called a humming-bird moth."

"Where did it come from?" Mary asked.

Her father's eyes twinkled. "Mary, do you remember the big green worm you found on the tomato vines this morning?"

"Yes," Mary answered. "I don't like tomato worms."

"Well, some day, if nothing happens to that worm, it will make a moth just like this one," her father said.

Mary and Jack were so surprised that for a moment they could say nothing. Then Jack drew a long breath, saying, "I don't like tomato worms, either, but after this I shall think of that moth when I see one."

"Well," Mary said, as they went into the house, "the moth is pretty but I like humming birds better. I am glad the baby humming birds never had to be big green worms!"

BILLY BLUE JAY

Billy Blue Jay was young and lively. His colors were bright, his voice the loudest in the orchard and, he thought, by far the most beautiful. He liked to tease, and none of the smaller birds would have anything to do with him.

One day he was in the orchard, looking for mischief. On a branch of an apple-tree, close up to the trunk, sat old Mr. Owl, fast asleep. Billy's black eyes grew bright, and the crest upon his head stiffened with excitement.

"Ha! ha!" he said to himself. "Now we shall see some fun. I shall play a joke on this old owl."

He lit upon a neighboring tree and screamed in his loudest tones, "Thief! Thief!"

At first no one paid any attention, for Billy was always calling some one a thief. At

length, however, an old blue jay that was passing, stopped and saw the owl. Now none of the birds like Mr. Owl. They are very much afraid of him. So, when the old jay saw him in the apple-tree she, too, cried loudly, "Thief! Thief!"

Hearing their screams, up flew another blue jay to see what the noise was about. Then came another and another, until eight or ten were gathered, each one trying to scream louder than his neighbor.

The din awoke old Mr. Owl. He opened his round eyes and looked about him. The light hurt his eyes and the noise hurt his ears. He opened his eyes very wide and snapped his bill. Some of the blue jays moved farther away, but still screamed. The owl ruffled his feathers until he seemed twice as big as before. The blue jays drew away a bit farther, but still flew about in a most excited manner, screaming, "Thief! Thief!"

At last old Mr. Owl could stand it no longer. He did not like the light and he wanted to sleep. He spread his great wings and sailed silently across the road to the oak tree. This pleased the blue jays. Believing that he was afraid of them, they screamed the more loudly and flew across the road after him.

Mr. Owl stayed in the oak tree but a short time. Again he spread his wings and flew away across the meadow to the woods. He hoped to leave the jays behind. They, however, would not be left behind. This was more excitement than they had had in many a long day, and they were not yet ready to give up the chase. And the voice of Billy Blue Jay was loudest of all.

From tree to tree they followed, through the woods, until old Mr. Owl entered a hollow tree. Here the jays stopped. Not even the bravest of them dared enter that hollow tree. Round and round it they flew. Then, as time passed and Mr. Owl did not appear, they began to return to the orchard, one by one.

Billy Blue Jay was the last to leave. He reached the orchard feeling very proud of himself for the excitement which he had caused.

"See me! See me!" he called, from the branch of a tree close to the fence. He spread

his blue wings and his crest stood very straight. "See me! See me!"

As no one noticed him, however, he at last flew away to find his dinner, and quiet once more came to the orchard.

MARY'S FLOWER GARDEN

One fine morning Mary set out for the woods with a basket and a trowel. She had decided to have a little wild-flower garden all her own. She had picked out a warm corner near the garden wall, and Jack had helped her make it ready. Now she was going to get the flowers to put into it.

Not far from the edge of the woods she stopped and, setting her basket on the ground, began to dig up a large violet with many blossoms. She lifted out much of the rich earth around the roots and put it carefully into her basket. Then she went on.

"Here are some hepaticas," she said, as she came to a big tree. The flowers were gone, but Mary knew that the hairy stems and heart-shaped green leaves were those of the hepatica.

"They seem to like to grow at the foot of a tree," she said. "I will put them under the maple tree by the wall."

Before some round, green leaves, she stopped again. "I wonder what these are," she thought. "I am sure they belong to some pretty spring flower, but I can't remember what it is. I shall take some, anyway, and Mother can tell me what they are."

The long thick roots grew out sidewise from the stem. As Mary did not know this, she broke off a part of the first root, but after that she was more careful. She put five of the plants into her basket.

As she went on, she looked down at her hands. One of them was red.

"Why, I have cut my hand!" she said aloud. "How can I have done it? I did not feel it."

She looked more carefully, but she could find no cut. Then she stopped and laughed. "Oh, I know now what those flowers are," she said

to herself. "They are blood-roots. This blood must be the sap from the root which broke off. It surely looks like blood!" And she laughed again at the joke upon herself.

Next she stopped before a large group of May-apples. The leaves looked like little, green umbrellas. In their shade, as if hiding from the sunlight, hung the beautiful white flowers. Their thick waxy petals held a strong sweet

odor. Mary thought they looked like little water-lilies growing there in the forest.

By the time Mary started for home her basket was full. She did not know the names of some of the plants, but she knew that they would have pretty flowers in the spring. She put moss over their roots to keep them fresh. The basket was now very heavy, and she stopped several times to rest as she crossed the meadow. She was glad to meet her father as she came out on the road, and to let him carry her basket.

When she reached home she set the flowers carefully in the ground which had been made ready for them. The next morning she went to look at them. Some of the leaves were withered, but all of the plants seemed to be doing well.

"I wonder if they know they have a new home," she thought, as she looked at a bunch of bluebells. Just then a gentle breeze passed through the garden and, as it touched the

flowers, it seemed to the little girl that she could almost hear their little bells ring.

"I believe they are happy in their new home, anyway," she said, as she went back to the house.

HOW THE CATBIRD GOT HIS SONG

In a bush in the meadow a slim gray bird, with bright black eyes and a black cap upon his head, was hopping briskly about. Suddenly he stopped and listened. A robin was singing in the oak tree not far away.

When the song stopped, the catbird began to sing to himself, very softly at first, then quite loudly. Strange to say, it was the very song that the robin had been singing. At the sound the robin stopped. Then he flew down to the bush, but the catbird did not wait to be found out. With a mew that sounded much like that of a kitten, he spread his wings and flew away across the meadow.

In the top of a tall tree a cardinal was whistling gayly. The catbird stopped not far away.

"I believe I could do that," he said to himself. Then he, too, began to whistle. It was not a very good whistle, for this was much

harder to get than the robin's song had been. The catbird soon gave up.

After a time a big brown thrasher began to sing in a near-by tree. His song was much easier, and soon the catbird could sing it almost as well as the brown thrasher himself.

Now the brown thrasher likes his song so well that he sings each note two or three times. The catbird, however, seemed to think that a waste of time. With him, once was quite enough for any note. For this reason his song did not sound exactly like that of the brown thrasher.

All that day the catbird flew about from bush to bush, mocking the other birds or mewing like a lost kitten, and having the best of times. Late in the afternoon he flew into a bush where another catbird sat. At once she flew away. He followed her, and when she stopped, he sat on a twig not far away and watched her. She watched him but did not move.

By and by he began to sing a low, sweet song. Still she watched him without moving. He grew bolder. He moved slowly along his twig toward her. She watched him until he was only a few feet away. Then she was gone like a flash.

The catbird was very much surprised, but he lost no time in following her. Back and forth and in and out they flew. Sometimes he would sing softly while she stopped to listen, but she would not let him come too near.

When the sun began to sink in the west, however, the two birds sat side by side on a twig, and, as the shadows grew longer over the meadow, the catbird began to sing. It was not the warble of the robin, nor the whistle of the cardinal, nor the song of the brown thrasher. It was not the song of any bird, but was a song of his own, made from the sweetness of all of them. And now, as the great red sun sank from sight behind the trees, he sat in the bush which they had chosen for their home and sang his beautiful song to his little gray mate.

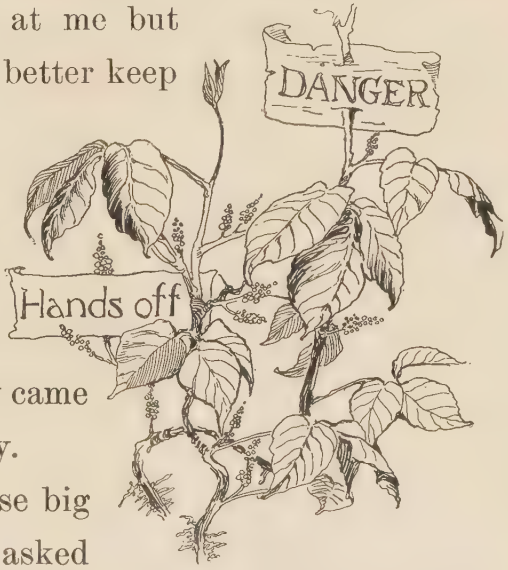
POISON IVY

A vine climbed up the great trunk of an oak tree growing in the woods. The vine was thick and hairy. Round and round it twined, like a great snake. Far above the ground it spread out its big green leaves, which were not like the oak leaves. Each was made of three leaflets growing together.

Close beside the big oak grew a smaller one. The vine climbed up this, also, and spread out until there were no oak leaves to be seen except at the very top. One could hardly have told that it was an oak tree.

Among these green leaves grew bunches of white berries. They were beautiful berries, but none of the little forest people would touch them. Even the birds that liked berries knew better than to touch them, for they were the berries of poison ivy.

Deeper in the woods, in a little clear spot between the trees, the ground was covered with more green leaves growing in threes. Tall and straight they stood, making a green carpet on the floor of the forest. But no one dared to touch them. "Hands off!" they seemed to say. "You may look at me but you would much better keep away from me."



One day Mary and Jack were walking in the woods with their father, when they came to the poison ivy.

"What are these big green leaves?" asked Mary, who was walking ahead of the others.

"Do not touch them!" cried her father. "Come, we must go around them. They are poison ivy."

"I thought poison ivy was a vine," said Jack.

"It is a vine," his father answered; "but sometimes the young shoots grow in this way. When they get older they will make a vine."

"I wonder if I shall know it when I see it again," said Mary, looking at the big green leaves.

Her father said, "I read a little verse once that may help you to remember. This is it:

'Leaves three,
Quickly flee!'

That means to run away from anything which has three leaves growing together. It is pretty sure to be poison ivy."

"I believe there is some poison ivy on our orchard wall," Mary said, as they started for home.

"I do not think so, but, if there is, we must get rid of it," her father answered. "We will go home that way and see."

When they reached the orchard, Mary pointed to a vine running over the stone wall.

"Oh, no, that is not poison ivy," her father said. "See, it has five leaflets growing together,

instead of three. This is Virginia creeper. It is not poison. Here are the little green berries. You see they are not like those of the poison ivy. Later on they will turn dark blue."

All the rest of the way the children said over and over the little verse which their father had given them:

"Leaves three,
Quickly flee!"

By the time they reached home they were sure that they would always know poison ivy.

A TRUE FAIRY TALE

At one end of the little pond in the meadow grew a bunch of tall cat-tails. One morning as Mary was passing them, she saw a strange-looking insect hanging to one of the long green leaves. It had rings upon its body, its legs were long, and its eyes were big and round.

"What can it be?" thought Mary. She went a little closer, and then she saw that it was not an insect at all, but only a cast-off skin. There was an opening in the back and the skin was quite empty.

"I wonder what came out of it," she said to herself.

At that moment her question was answered in a very strange manner. Not far away was another of the skins, but this one did not seem

to be empty. As Mary looked at it, a little crack appeared in its back. The crack grew bigger and bigger, and Mary almost held her breath as out of the opening came a shining green body.

"Oh, I believe it is a dragon-fly!" she cried. It was true. Before long a beautiful dragon-fly was holding to the leaf beside its old skin. At first its wings were only tiny lumps on its sides, but they grew until they became thin and gauzy and shone with all the colors of the rainbow. They were still wet, and the poor dragon-fly looked very helpless. It could

not walk about upon its long legs, and its wings were not yet stiff enough to fly.

Other dragon-flies in beautiful shining suits were flying about over the pond, sometimes dipping the ends of their long bodies into the water. "How glad they must be to get out of those old skins and fly about in the sunshine!" Mary thought.

When she went back to the house she told Jack what she had seen beside the pond. Jack was very much interested and the children went back to the pond together to see if they could find another dragon-fly coming out of its old skin.

"It says in one of our books that dragon-flies live in the water at first," said Jack. "The eggs hatch into those queer insects you saw, and they live in the water until their wings grow."

By this time the children had reached the pond. Mary showed Jack the empty skins.

Beside one was a dragon-fly, just drying its wings.

"What big eyes they have!" said Mary. "I should think the other insects would be afraid of them."

"They are afraid of them," answered Jack. "They must be sure-enough dragons to the little insects. I wish I had eyes like that. Dragon-flies can see all around, even behind them. It is a good thing for us that they can see so well, for they catch a great many mosquitoes."

"I am glad that I found that dragon-fly coming out," said Mary, as they went home. "I have seen lots of dragon-flies, but I never knew before that they lived in the water when they were little. It is just like a fairy tale."

"Yes," said her brother, "but I think it is better than a fairy tale because it is true."

WHY BOBBY SQUIRREL LEFT THE OAK TREE

One day as Bobby Squirrel sat in his doorway, his bright eyes spied a hole in an apple-tree across the road. At once he wanted to find out what was in the hole, so he went across the road and poked his head in. He was so surprised at what he saw that he stood and stared.

In the hole were four baby birds, but Bobby hardly knew they were birds. They had no feathers and their mouths were very big. Bobby thought them ugly indeed. As he stood looking at them he heard a great outcry and felt something sharp upon his back. He drew out his

head in a hurry and, without stopping to see what had happened, scampered across the road to his own home.

Here he stayed for some time. Then he went to his door and looked out. As all was quiet in in the orchard, Bobby at length grew quite bold. He decided to find out more about the queer family in the apple-tree.

Again he crossed the road and, stretching out on a long branch of a near-by tree, waited to see what would happen. He did not have to wait long. A head appeared at the hole in the apple-tree, and a moment later a black-and-white bird flew away through the orchard.

"Ho, ho!" thought Bobby Squirrel. "That is only Mr. Woodpecker. I am not afraid of him. I believe I shall go and look into that hole again."

After that Bobby Squirrel went every day and looked in at the woodpeckers' doorway. He did not harm the little birds; indeed he could not

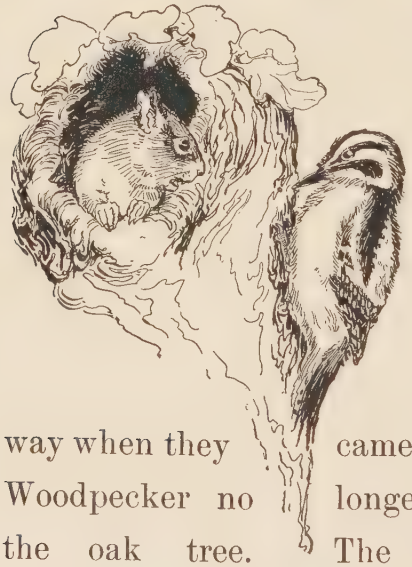
have crawled into the hole if he had tried. Sometimes Father or Mother Woodpecker returned in time to find him at their door. Then Bobby had to leave the orchard in a hurry, for their bills were long and sharp. Two or three times Father Woodpecker had nipped him on the back.

About a week after Bobby Squirrel's first visit to the home of the woodpeckers he was awakened from his afternoon nap by tapping outside his door. He opened one eye and listened.

All was quiet, and Bobby was just falling asleep again when there came another tap, tap, tap, upon the tree trunk. He tried to sleep but could not. Then he grew angry and rushed out to see who dared disturb his nap in this way. There upon the tree close to his door was Father Woodpecker. Tap, tap, tap, went his strong bill.

"Go away!" screamed Bobby Squirrel. "What do you mean by making such a noise?" But Father Woodpecker kept on tapping.

Bobby Squirrel scolded, but it did no good. Every day Father Woodpecker came and tapped on the tree. Bobby could get no rest, and at last, unable to stand it longer, he left the hole in the oak tree and found a new home in the woods.



All was now peaceful in the orchard. The woodpeckers no longer found Bobby Squirrel in their doorway when they came home, and Father Woodpecker no longer seemed to care for the oak tree. The little woodpeckers had grown much larger when one day Bobby Squirrel returned to the oak tree.

He crept up very quietly and looked into his old home. It was exactly as he had left it, and for a time he was so glad to be there again that he stayed quietly in his hollow tree.

Then he became hungry. He thought of the corn in the corn-crib not far away. The woodpeckers were not in sight, and Bobby Squirrel scampered across the orchard, not even looking at their hollow tree. When he was on his way home again, Father Woodpecker saw him and began to scream, but Bobby paid no attention to him.

He worked busily all the next day, carrying corn to the oak tree. He even put corn under little pieces of loose bark on the tree trunk. Then, happy to be at home once more, he ate and slept and played just as he had done before Father Woodpecker drove him away from the oak tree.

THE CHURCH IN THE WOODS

It was Sunday. Even in the woods it was easy to tell that it was Sunday, for everything was still and peaceful. And away in the woods they were having church.

This, however, was not the sort of church you go to. There was no big building with a spire and stained-glass windows. The big forest trees made a roof for this church, and the sunbeams which crept between their branches filled it with a soft, green light. There was a thick carpet of moss on the floor. There was no big organ, but the wind in the leaves and the humming of the bees made the sweetest music you ever heard.

Then you should have seen those who came to church! They were all dressed in their

very best summer clothes. They were not the people whom you see when you go to church.

There was the Buttercup family, all the little buttercups dressed in shining yellow. There were Father and Mother Violet and the baby violets with their deep blue eyes. Sweet William came in lavender. Mr. Cricket walked in, dressed in his black satin suit. He always carried his fiddle with him, even when he went to church.

Mrs. Butterfly flew in. She had just come out of a tiny green-and-gold house hanging on the milkweed in the meadow. Her dress was very beautiful, all brown and black and white, and covered with soft down. We could not make one like it, no matter how hard we tried.

And then the funniest old fellow came in! He was dressed in a fuzzy black and yellow suit. At first he seemed not to know that he was in church, for he buzzed about, talking and

grumbling to himself. When he saw all the little forest people he was so surprised that he bumped into a tree and fell to the ground. He found himself beside a shy white violet.

"How do you do," said Mr. Bumble-bee, for he it was. "May I sit here beside you?"

Although he seemed loud and rough, the little violet saw that he was really quite kind and gentle. So she was glad to have him sit beside her.

And now have you guessed who preached in this beautiful church? I will tell you about

him. He stood under a big tree, tall and straight, and dressed in green. At his back and over his head was a canopy of green, covered with dark spots. Yes, it was Jack-in-the-pulpit who preached in the woods on that summer Sunday.

You and I could not have heard what he said, but it must have been something very beautiful, for all the little forest people were quiet and happy. When he had finished, away off in the woods a little bird sang a soft, sweet song to tell how thankful he was for that beautiful Sunday morning.

JIMMY CHIPMUNK'S DINNER

Jimmy Chipmunk had a snug home between the stones in the orchard wall. It was a fine place to have a home, for all around him were the best cracks in the world for storing nuts.

One day Jimmy sat in the sunshine at his door. His coat was sleek and smooth, and the black stripes down his back shone like satin. Jimmy was always neat and clean.

Suddenly he seemed to think of something most important which he had forgotten to do. He jumped from the wall and away he went

in a great hurry. At the edge of the orchard, however, he stopped and, sitting upon his haunches, looked about him. All was quiet and, as Jimmy was feeling very brave that day, he decided to go up toward the house.

He crossed the lawn, stopping every few steps to sit up and listen. Not far from the porch he came to a big maple tree. Here he had a surprise. Lying on the ground were several small, yellow things which Jimmy had never seen before. At first he felt a little afraid of them, but, as they did not move or make a sound, he crept a little closer. Then there came to him a wonderful odor which made Jimmy forget his fear.

Now these strange, yellow things with the wonderful odor were peanuts which Mary had put under the tree for Bobby Squirrel. Mary was hiding not far away and she almost laughed aloud as she watched Jimmy Chipmunk.

He picked up one of the peanuts and, sitting on his haunches just as she had seen Bobby Squirrel do, he smelled it. It smelled even better than before. Then he put it into his mouth, cracked the soft shell, and tasted the nut. Mary could see how good he thought it.

He ate another and another. But the last nut he did not eat. Taking it in his mouth, he started back across the lawn as he had come.

"He must be taking it to his home," thought Mary. "I will put out some more and perhaps he will come back again."

Sure enough, it was not long before here came Jimmy Chipmunk again. This time he did not eat any of the nuts. Taking as many as his cheeks would hold, he carried them to the orchard and hid them in the cracks in the wall.

Again he went back to the tree, but this time, just as he was leaving, Bobby Squirrel

Jimmy Chipmunk had a good start. *Page* 107.

came racing up. As Mary often put nuts under the tree for Bobby Squirrel, he thought that everything there belonged to him. So when he saw little Jimmy Chipmunk carrying away the peanuts he was very angry. He ran after him, scolding as he went. But Jimmy Chipmunk had a good start. He soon reached the orchard and disappeared down a hole in the ground. As Bobby Squirrel could not follow, he soon went back to the tree, still scolding.

He had not been gone long when Jimmy Chipmunk poked his head out. Not seeing Bobby Squirrel, he came out and ran quickly to the stone wall, where he safely hid away his peanuts. He did not go back to the house that day, but he did go almost every day after that, and often found good things to carry away to his storehouse in the orchard wall.

TAKING THE BEE TREE

One evening, as Jack's father came into the house, he said, "Well, Jack, do you want to go and get some honey to-morrow?"

"Oh yes!" Jack cried, jumping up and clapping his hands. "Shall we go to the big tree in the woods?"

"Yes, I think we can take some of the honey now," his father answered.

The next morning Jack was up bright and early. He was to go with his father and the hired man. Mary was very fond of honey, but she was afraid of the bees, so she was to stay at home with Mother. How she did laugh when she saw Jack getting ready to go!

As the bees would be angry at having some of their honey taken, Jack had to dress just as the two men did. Over his head was a sort of cage

made of fine wire. A thick cloth was sewed to the lower edge of this, and was tied down to keep the bees out. He wore long trousers tied to his ankles, and on his hands were thick gloves which reached to his elbows. These were tied around the top. Jack laughed, too, when he looked at himself in the glass.

When they reached the big hollow tree, the two men took their axes and began to chop. At the first stroke the bees came swarming out, and Jack was very glad, indeed, that he had worn those queer clothes. In what seemed to him a very short time his father called out, "All right! Here it comes." A moment later the great tree came crashing to the ground. The men soon made a hole in the trunk and there was the honey, pounds and pounds of it.

Then how angry the bees were! They buzzed about until the air seemed full of them, and it was hard to take out the honey without getting many bees with it.

"There!" said Jack's father, when they had taken out about half of the honey. "We will leave the rest for the bees."

"Won't the honey run out of the trunk, now?" asked Jack.

"The bees will carry it to some other tree," his father replied. "See, they have already begun." He was right. The busy little workers had begun to carry the honey to a safer place.

When they reached home Mary ran to meet them, and her eyes shone at sight of the honey. "Oh, Jack! I won't laugh any more at the way you look," she said.

"I do love honey. Are you sure the bees did not sting you?"

"No indeed!" Jack answered. "You don't know what you missed, Mary." But Mary was not sorry she had stayed at home.

That afternoon both children went back to the bee tree. They did not go very near, but they could see that most of the honey was gone and the bees were still busy. They were flying farther into the woods, but the children did not follow them.

The next time they went back to the big tree the honey was all gone, and the bees were gone, too. A great many ants were gathered on the trunk, however, getting the sweetness which still clung to it.

WHAT JACK FOUND IN THE MEADOW

Jack sat on the steps, wondering what he should do. Mary had gone to town with Mother and he was feeling rather lonely. Even Rover had disappeared.

"I know what I shall do," he said, suddenly, jumping to his feet. "I shall go fishing."

He took a tin can and an old fork, and a few minutes later he was digging in the meadow for worms. But the meadow did not seem to be a good place for worms. He found only a few, and these were so small that he did not put them into his can.

He was just about to give up when his fork struck something hard. Wondering what it could be, he dug a bit farther and turned up a strange-looking stone. It was flat and was shaped like a triangle. Jack had never seen a stone like it

before. He took it to his father, who was working in the barn, and asked him about it.

"Why Jack!" he said. "This is an Indian arrow-head. Where did you get it?"

"In the meadow," Jack answered. "What is it for?"

"Sit down here and I will tell you about it," and his father sat down in the doorway, while Jack sat on the ground just outside.

"You know," began his father, "that a long time ago a great many Indians lived here. They did not have guns before the white people came. So they took a very hard stone called flint, and made sharp arrow-heads to use when they went hunting. This is one of them. The sharp point has been broken off."

"Did an Indian have this?" asked Jack, his eyes big and round as he looked at the arrow-head.

"Yes indeed!" his father said. "It may have belonged to a little brown Indian boy, or perhaps to a brave hunter."

"I wish I were an Indian boy," said Jack. "I would go into the woods and kill a bear. Do you think I could find some more arrow-heads if I dug again?"

"It is not likely that you would," his father answered, "but you might try it." Then his eyes twinkled. "I can tell you where to find some more arrow-heads, Jack, but they will not look exactly like this one."

"Where?" cried Jack, jumping to his feet. "I don't care whether they are just like this one or not."

"Go to the little pond in the meadow and look on the shore, close to the water," and his father's eyes twinkled again. Then, as he went into the barn, he called back over his shoulder, "Remember, Jack, they will not look exactly like this one."

But Jack waited to hear no more. He ran off to the little pond and looked up and down the shore. There were many tall green plants grow-

ing at the water's edge, but he found no arrow-heads. He looked again, very carefully, but still

found none. Then he sat down on a log, much disappointed.

"I can't find any arrow-heads" he said to himself. "If Father knew there were some

here, I don't see why he didn't bring them home."

Then he thought of his father's last words: "Remember, Jack, they will not look exactly like this one."

"I wonder what he meant by that," Jack thought. He sat with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands, looking at the water. Then, suddenly, he sat up straight and a smile came to his face. He thought again of what his father had said, and of the twinkle in his eyes. Then Jack laughed aloud.

"That is just what he meant!" he said. He stepped to the water's edge and picked a green leaf growing there. He held it up beside his Indian arrow-head. The two were almost the same shape!

Jack laughed again. "That is a good joke on me," he said. "This leaf is not exactly like my Indian arrow-head, but it is an arrow-head just the same."

Jack knew that the plant which he held in his hand was called an arrow-head lily. Now he saw how it got its name. "I will pick one of the flowers," he said, "to show Father that I found his arrow-heads."

He picked a stem on which grew three of the beautiful flowers. As he went home he was still laughing at his father's joke, but he was glad that he had found one real Indian arrow-head.

A PRESENT FROM THE CITY

One day when the children's father came home from a trip to the city, he brought them three wonderful books, one of birds, one of butterflies, and one of flowers. They spent many happy hours looking at the beautiful colored pictures and reading about them.

"Oh, here is a luna moth like the one we found in the woods," cried Mary. "And here is a picture of the worm, too. Dear me, isn't it ugly! I should think it would be very glad to turn into a lovely green moth."

But Jack was looking at the bird-book. "Just look at this cardinal," he cried, his eyes shining. "Isn't he a beauty? He looks just like the one that had a nest in the woods. The book tells what his song is, too."

For a time neither of the children spoke. Then Jack said, "Oh, Mary! Here is an

oriole's nest like the one we found in the orchard."

"Yes," Mary answered, looking over his shoulder, "but I don't believe this one has a

pink ribbon in it, as the one in our orchard has." Both children laughed, for they remembered how Mother Oriole had carried off Mary's

pink ribbon and had woven it into her nest in the apple-tree.

"Here is a picture of the old black crow that wasn't afraid of our scarecrow," said Jack, pointing to a big black bird. "It looks just like him, doesn't it? And here is a quail. Oh, Mary, do you remember how the quail made us think her wing was broken, so as to get us away from her babies?"

"Here is a good picture of a Jack-in-the-pulpit," said Mary, who was turning the leaves of the flower-book. "I saw one in the woods yesterday."

"There are a great many flowers in there that I have never seen," said Jack, coming to look with her. "I am going to see if I can find some of them the next time we go to the woods."

"Yes," said his sister, "and then we can come back and look at them in the books. I am so glad we have them!"

That very afternoon the children went for a walk, and they had so much to talk about that they could hardly eat their supper. They got out their new books and showed their father and mother what they had seen.

"Well, well!" said their father at last. "You surely are finding a great many things. We shall have to get some more books some day, books with trees and insects in them."

"Oh, I hope we can get one that has a picture of the old mud turtle that lives in the pond!" cried Mary. "We saw him lying on a log in the water to-day."

"And one with dragon-flies in it," Jack put in. "I want to read about them."

So the children talked until bedtime and, even after they had gone to bed, they were almost too excited to sleep. When Mary did at last go to sleep she dreamed that she was sitting on a log in the pond, talking to an old mud turtle which was looking at a beautiful picture-book.

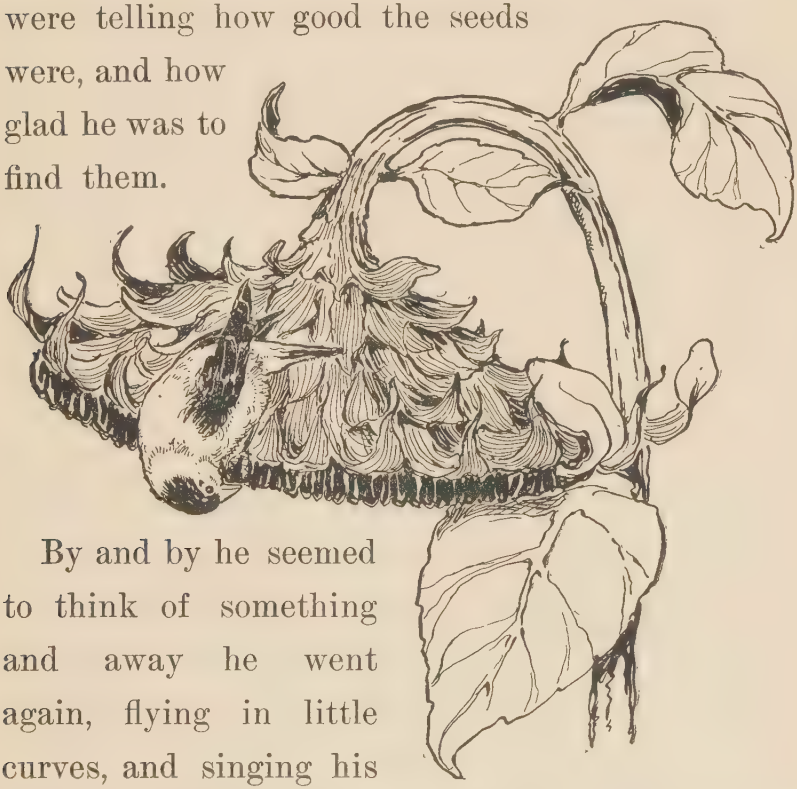
THE SUNFLOWER'S VISITOR

At the foot of the garden grew a row of tall yellow sunflowers. In the morning they looked to the east to see the jolly face of the sun as it came up over the garden wall. All day they watched it, until it sank out of sight in the west. At one end of the row was a very large flower, which had bloomed before any of the others. Now its yellow petals were gone, and the seeds were black and hard.

One day two bright black eyes spied the sunflower seeds. The eyes belonged to a tiny yellow bird, with a black cap upon his head, and black feathers in his wings and tail. He flew into the garden, singing a gay little song.

He lit on the top of the tall sunflower and swayed there for a moment. Then he almost stood on his little black head as he pecked at

the seeds in the center of the flower. Now and then he talked softly to himself as if he were telling how good the seeds were, and how glad he was to find them.



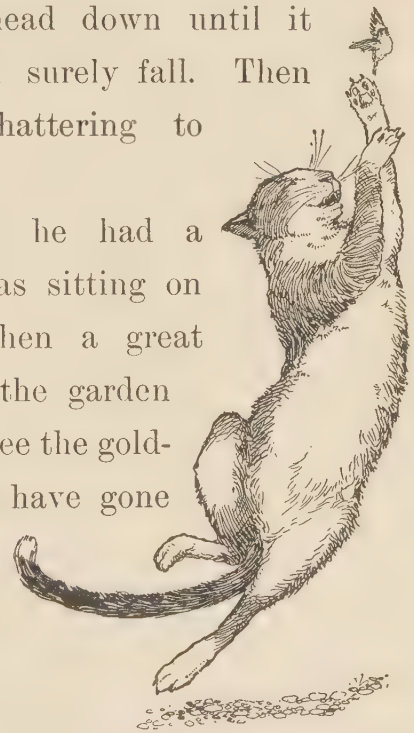
By and by he seemed to think of something and away he went again, flying in little curves, and singing his short little song. Mary heard the song as she was passing through the garden, and stopped to listen. "That sounds like a canary," she said to Jack.

"It is a wild canary," her brother answered. "The bird-book says that its true name is goldfinch, but it is called a wild canary because of its song."

The children went on. They were hardly out of sight when back came the goldfinch. This time he brought with him another little bird, whose feathers were a dull yellow. This was Mrs. Goldfinch, and she seemed to enjoy the sunflower seeds as much as her little yellow and black companion had done. They tried the other flowers, but found that their seeds had not yet ripened.

The goldfinches seemed to like the garden, for they came often and brought their family. The young birds were dressed much like their mother. All day they flew about the garden, and sang their gay little songs. They seemed to have forgotten the tiny nest lined with thistledown and set in the willow tree beside the brook.

One of them, who was bigger and brighter than the others, felt very bold. He chased his brothers and sisters about. He clung to the sunflowers with his head down until it seemed that he would surely fall. Then off he would go, chattering to himself.



One day, however, he had a terrible fright. He was sitting on the tall sunflower when a great gray cat came down the garden walk. The cat did not see the goldfinch, and all would have gone well if the little bird had stayed quietly on the sunflower. But he wanted to see more of this strange thing that had come into the garden.

He flew to a lower flower. This one was so very small that it bent far down when the goldfinch lit upon it. At the same time the

cat saw the bird. He crouched a moment in the path, then sprang forward. The goldfinch had just time to spread his wings and fly out of reach, with a loud chirp of fear.

The gray cat went on down the path as if nothing had happened. But the frightened little bird flew back to the others in a great hurry. He had seen quite enough of that strange gray animal and was glad to keep far away from it.

WHY THE POPLAR LEAVES MOVED

Jack sat on the steps of the porch, fanning himself with his hat. It was very hot and still.

"Oh dear, I wish it would cool off!" he said to himself. "There isn't a bit of breeze."

Then he noticed that the leaves on the tall poplar trees beside the gate were moving gently. He looked at the maple tree, but its leaves hung still.

"I wonder what makes the poplar leaves move," Jack thought. "There must be a little breeze, but it is queer that it does not move the maple leaves."

Just then his mother came out on the porch and Jack asked her about it.

"I think if you will look carefully at the poplar leaves you will see why they move when the other leaves do not," she said, as she sat down in a rocking-chair.

Jack went to the gate and picked one of the thick green leaves which grew close to the trunk

of the tree. As he walked back to the porch, he looked carefully at the leaf.

Sure enough, he soon saw why it moved so easily. The stem was quite flat, but it was not fastened to the flat side of the leaf. The edge of the stem came next to the flat leaf so that, whenever a tiny breeze passed through the tree, the leaves felt it. Jack looked at the maple leaves and found that they were not fastened to their stems as the poplar leaves were.

"Are the leaves of all the poplar trees like that?" he asked.

"Yes," answered his mother, "there are many kinds of poplar trees, but the leaves of all of them are made just like this one. They will move when the leaves of other trees are quiet."

While she was speaking, a little breeze had come up. It rustled through the poplar trees and gently shook the leaves of the maple.

"I think it is going to rain," she said. "Look at the maple leaves."

The breeze had grown stronger and, as it blew through the big tree, it showed the under side of

all the leaves. This side was not green, like the top. It looked almost white. "It looks as if the leaves were made of silver," said Jack.

"That is just where the tree gets its name," his mother answered, smiling. "It is called a silver maple. I think that little breeze will bring us rain," and she went into the house to see that everything was ready.

Jack stayed on the porch and watched the clouds as they began to roll up. The poplar leaves danced and rustled all over the tree, and Jack could see only the silvery side of the maple leaves. Mary came out on the porch and he told her about it.

"Look at this one," she said, picking up a small leaf which had been blown upon the step. "It looks as if part of it had been torn off."

Her brother looked at it. One side of the leaf, next to the short stem, was longer than the other side. As Mary had said, it looked as if part of it had been torn off.

"Oh, I know what that is!" cried Jack. "That is an elm leaf. All the elm leaves are like that. It has not been torn off. It just grows that way."

At that moment the clouds which had been gathering, reached them. The rain began to fall and the wind blew it into the porch.

"Trees are like people, aren't they?" said Mary, as they went indoors. "All of those which belong to one family look somewhat alike."

FOX-FIRE

One warm afternoon Jack was sitting under an apple-tree in the orchard, reading a book. The book was about giants and dragons and Jack was enjoying it very much. But by and by he grew sleepy.

"I believe I will go and take a walk," he thought, as he closed his book and stood up.

The lowest branch of the old apple-tree had rotted and broken off not far from the trunk. In the part which was left was a hole, and in this Jack put his book until he should come back. When he returned from his walk, however, he forgot all about the book and went on to the house. He did not think of it again until after supper.

"It looks like rain," said his father, as he came in from the barn.

Then Jack remembered his book, and told where he had left it. "I know just where it is," he said, "and I do not want it to get wet. I will go and get it."

Jack knew his way very well, even in the dark, and in a few minutes he had reached the apple-tree. The hole in the rotten branch was just even with his eyes. As he looked into it, he gave a start of surprise and his eyes grew wide.

The inside of the branch was filled with a soft light. It did not look a bit like fire, and Jack could not imagine what it was. He had never before seen anything like it. He put in his hand and drew out the book. Still there was that strange light. "It isn't fire," he said to himself. "It is not warm and it does not burn the branch."

Again he put his hand into the hole and drew out a small piece of dead wood. It shone in his hand with the same glow which

was in the branch. Jack turned it over and over, but could find no reason for the light.

"Well!" he said to himself, "I will take it to the house and ask Father about it." So he carried the little piece of wood to the house.

When he came into the lighted room, he looked eagerly at the bit of wood in his hand. But the glow had disappeared, and he held only a piece of decayed wood. Jack felt much disappointed. He told the others about it.

"Bring the wood in here," said his father, going into the kitchen where there was no light. The others followed him. There the wood again shone with that strange light.

"What is it?" asked Mary, almost afraid to touch it.

"It is called fox-fire," her father answered. "This old decayed wood has something in it called phosphorus, which shines in the dark with this strange light. I have often seen it in the woods after dark."

"Did it frighten you the first time you saw it?" asked Jack, remembering how he had started back when he saw it in the apple-tree.

"Yes indeed!" and his father laughed. "I was only a boy, but I have never forgotten it. I had been to the woods one day with Pat. Pat was my dog that went with me everywhere, just as Rover goes with you.

"Well, Pat had been rolling in a place where there was much fine decayed wood. This wood had fox-fire in it, and that night it shone in Pat's long thick hair just as this wood does. I had never seen fox-fire before, and I thought it was real fire. So I threw a bucket of cold water upon poor Pat, to put out the fire. My father told me afterward what it was."

The children laughed at their father's story as they all went back into the lighted room. They left the piece of wood in the kitchen, and now and then Jack or Mary would go

back to look at it. Jack even took it to his room when he went to bed, but when he awoke in the morning there was nothing to be seen except a bit of old decayed wood.

THE SHOW IN THE GARDEN

One evening about six o'clock the children's father came into the house, saying, "Well, Jack and Mary, would you like to see a wonderful show?"

"A show!" both children cried at once. "Are we going to town?"

"No indeed! We do not need to go to town to see this show. It has come to us." Their father smiled as he led the way out of the house to a bench in the garden. The back of the bench was made of little branches of trees, and it was to this that the children's father pointed, saying, "There is the stage. Now look closely and see if you can find my show."

The children looked where he pointed, and there, on the back of the bench, they saw a spider just beginning to make her web. She

spun out a long line which caught not far away on another part of the bench. Mrs. Spider ran quickly across this little bridge and fastened it at the other side.

Now she spun other threads and fastened them all at the center. They looked like the spokes of a wheel. When this was done she began at the center and worked round and round, leaving a very thin thread behind her. At the edge she stopped and seemed to be resting.

"Is the web done now?" asked Jack.

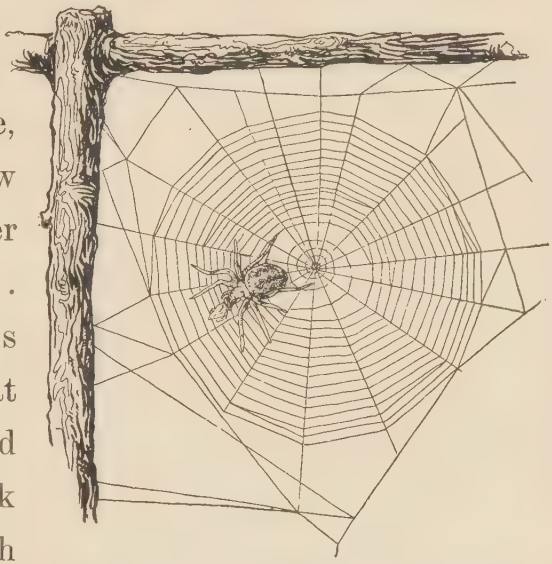
"Wait and see," his father answered. "I think that you will find that it is not."

Before long Mrs. Spider again went to work. She started at the outside and went swiftly round and round toward the center, leaving a thread behind her which looked thicker than the one she had first made. Just as she reached the center again, a tiny moth was caught in the web. At once Mrs. Spider ran to the moth and began to wrap it round and round with silk. Then she

went back to her resting-place at the center of the web.

"That must be her breakfast," said Mary.

"I don't see why the spider doesn't get caught in her own sticky threads," Jack said, as he looked at the beautiful web.



"Come here, and I will show you," his father answered. "Feel this thread that goes round and round." Jack touched it with his finger and so did Mary. The thread clung to their fingers and stretched far out before it let go.

"Now touch this," and he pointed to one of the threads which ran across the web from

the center to the outside. The children touched it and found to their surprise that it was not sticky at all.

"You see," said their father, "Mrs. Spider is very wise. She uses two kinds of thread in her web. The sticky threads, which wind round and round, are made to catch her food. The cross threads are made for her to walk on, and are quite dry."

It was almost dark when they went back to the house. Jack said, "I have seen a great many spider-webs, but I never before saw a spider make one, and I did not know that there were two kinds of thread in them."

FROM THE LAND OF SUMMER

One beautiful afternoon late in the summer Mary was walking down the road alone. The sky was blue. In it were a great many fleecy, white clouds. Mary thought they looked like beautiful silver boats, sailing on a deep blue river. She was so busy watching them and thinking about them that she walked on and on, farther than she had been for a long time.

Suddenly she looked down and was so surprised that she stopped in the middle of the road. Ahead of her was a whole field full of white clouds, just like those she had been watching in the sky. Mary rubbed her eyes and looked again. This time, however, she saw that they were not white clouds. They were white daisies and the field was full of them.

Mary had never seen so many daisies before. She climbed to the top rail of the fence and looked and looked. It seemed that she could not take her eyes off that great white field.

"I wonder where they all came from," she whispered.

"From the land of summer," softly answered a little breeze, as it touched her cheek lightly with its cool fingers.

And, as the breeze passed over the field, the daisies all nodded on their long green stems and seemed to say, very, very softly, "From the land of summer."

The sun shone down and, as it touched the daisies, the heart of each one turned to bright gold. It dazzled Mary's eyes so that she could hardly look at it. Then she saw something which she had not noticed before. It seemed to her as if a crowd of lovely fairies, dressed in white and yellow, flew about among the flowers. Now this way, now that, they went.

Sometimes they rested upon the flowers and again they floated lightly in the air above them. Though they had at first looked like fairies, Mary found that they were really butterflies. How many there were!

"Where do all the butterflies come from?" she asked. And the little breeze whispered softly in her ear, "From the land of summer," while the daisies nodded on their green stems and whispered low, "From the land of summer."

Mary looked and looked, until she knew that it must be time to go home. She climbed slowly down from the fence, her eyes still on the daisies. And, as she passed out of sight, they seemed to nod on their long green stems, saying softly, "Yes, from the land of summer."

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